



## **Visioneering Wichita Regional Comprehensive Recreation Plan Strategic Alliance Summary of Accomplishments to Date September 2007**

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Approximately 30 participants representing several municipalities and community groups throughout the Wichita MSA interested in recreation and parks met to preliminarily lay the foundation for the development of a regional, comprehensive recreation plan for the Wichita MSA. The participants have quickly made progress on several issues, including:

- Developing a preferred future vision for a regional, comprehensive recreation plan.
- Laying the groundwork to make the vision a reality through identification of next steps.
- Forming a leadership team with 12 members to date.
- Identifying additional stakeholder groups to participate once the full Strategic Alliance is launched.
- Developing a definition of what “recreation” is and what it is not.
- Reviewing the City of Wichita’s process to develop a future recreation plan.
- Visiting other municipalities in the Wichita MSA not in attendance at the May and June meetings in their local communities in order to engage them in participating in the discussion of the development of a regional, comprehensive recreation plan. These efforts also included a well-received presentation to REAP Economic Development Committee.
- Holding a preliminary meeting of Wichita MSA municipalities in September in order to: 1) Gain a shared understanding of individual, future recreation plans; and 2) To determine possible collective, natural partnership opportunities that would advantage individual municipalities in advancing their local future plans forward within the context of a larger, comprehensive regional recreation plan.
- Holding a follow-up preliminary meeting of Wichita MSA municipalities in December to continue the discussion of the development of an interactive website that would provide: 1) a searchable, map-based database of regional recreation information opportunities accessible by the general public; and 2) information on present recreation amenities and future recreation plans for regional municipalities and interested citizens.
- A sub-group is working to develop funding proposals to help support the development of the website. A \$15,000 Knight Foundation grant was awarded to initiate the development of the website.
- Developing an overview document outlining the Alliance and proposed regional recreation website to be used in: 1) developing future funding proposals; 2) creating partnerships with municipalities; and 3) establishing support (both governmental and community).
- Working to develop regional municipalities partnerships in order to centralize parks and recreation amenities information opportunities in meantime.
- Continuing to coordinate the efforts of the Alliance with other groups’ planning efforts, such as WAMPOS and ARACP.
- Obtaining REAP’s support for the Alliance’s efforts and providing ongoing progress updates to the REAP Economic Development Committee.

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### **Strategic Alliance Strategy**

Develop and implement a comprehensive master plan for recreation that determines a required level of service for each recreational element. Determine the gap between existing facilities and this level of service and eliminate the gap within 10 years while at the same time providing for annual growth as it occurs. Ensure that all facilities are staffed and maintained for high quality service. Levels of service for each element should ensure that proper consideration is given to age, income level and lifestyle with regional equity. Consideration will also be given to use of these facilities by visitors and tourists to the Wichita MSA and becoming a regional attraction for certain types of activities such as youth baseball, softball, hockey, biking, bowling, football, golf, walking, recreational centers, sporting clays, skating, etc. Implementation of the master plan will be based on meeting the Visioneering Wichita Key Benchmarks.

### **Strategic Alliance Benchmark**

Under development.

### **Quality of Life Foundation Vision Supported**

By 2024 the Wichita MSA will be a healthy, safe community that has a vibrant recreation, entertainment & arts focus that embraces diversity and builds pride.

### **Key Benchmarks Targeted**

**Arts/Recreation:** The Wichita MSA will be in the upper one-fourth of Places Rated Almanac's Arts and Recreation score by 2014.

**Job Growth:** By 2008, exceed the highest of the annual percentage job growth rate of the U.S., Omaha, Tulsa, Kansas City and Oklahoma City

*“Parks, recreational opportunities, and open space are essential elements of a vital, livable region and provide a multitude of economic, health, social, and ecological benefits. Through the collaborative planning efforts of the Regional Recreation Alliance, we can make great strides toward enhancing the quality of life in the region, strengthening the area economy, improving public health, and sustaining our environment.”*

**Janet Miller**

**Regional Recreational Alliance Leadership Team, Community Volunteer and Wichita Park Board President**

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